



June 27, 2012

David Huizenga  
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Dear Mr. Huizenga:

We are pleased to learn that the labors of many people have resulted in the extension of production at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PGDP). The Paducah Citizens Advisory Board recognizes that a host of people were involved in working out the details so that PGDP could remain operational for another year, until May 2013. We would especially like to recognize Mr. Bill Murphie of your staff for his tireless commitment to working with all parties to make the extension possible.

We feel the decision to re-enrich the high assay tails at the Paducah Plant was the correct decision. By making this decision, DOE Environmental Management (EM) will reduce its inventory of waste cylinders and, as a result, a significant remediation cost savings will be realized. It also will help preserve our natural uranium inventory for future use and provide a source of U.S. origin fuel to use for National Nuclear Security Administration needs in the coming years.

As we look beyond May 2013, we ask you to review our Recommendation 11-07, "Re-Enrichment of High Assay Tails". Of the 8,800 cylinders at Paducah which contain sufficient U-235 to re-feed, approximately 1,100 will be processed by May 2013. This leaves approximately 7,700 cylinders which have economic value. Allowing the Paducah Plant to continue to strip these tails cylinders would reduce waste volume for DOE EM (and thereby reduce remediation costs) while generating usable product and revenue. No funds are currently appropriated in the federal budget for the transition and for Decontamination and Decommissioning of the PGDP. By keeping the PGDP operational during this time of revenue shortfalls, DOE EM can delay the start of the massive post-operational cleanup of the PGDP while utilizing this opportunity to make transition plans.

Importantly, as a matter of national security, America's only source of domestically enriched uranium is produced at Paducah. Until American Centrifuge technology becomes a dependable and viable alternative, the Paducah Plant can provide enriched uranium for our national defense and nuclear energy needs so that America is not solely dependent upon a foreign-owned and controlled enrichment facility. Gaseous diffusion is, admittedly, an energy intensive method for enriching uranium. However, the fact remains that the PGDP is a safe and reliable plant. For sixty years the PGDP has been in continuous production, testifying to the brilliant minds which developed the technology.

DOE EM has made the wise decision to extract an asset from a liability. Once the final cell is silenced at the Paducah Plant, the opportunity to re-enrich the remaining high assay tails will be gone. For the sake of the nation and its people, it is imperative that the decision be made to re-enrich the remaining high-assay tails cylinders.

Respectfully,

Ralph Young  
PGDP Citizens Advisory Board Chair

Enclosure:

Recommendation 11-07



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